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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/53/L.38 and Add.1)]

53/31. Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind the indissoluble links between the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[1] and the foundations of any democratic society,

Recalling the Manila Declaration[2] adopted by the First International Conference of New or Restored Democracies[3] in June 1988,

Considering the major changes taking place on the international scene and the aspirations of all peoples for an international order based on the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including the promotion and encouragement of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all and other important principles, such as respect for the equal rights and self-determination of peoples, peace, democracy, justice, equality, the rule of law, pluralism, development, better standards of living and solidarity,

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] A/43/538, annex.

[3] Then called the International Conference of Newly Restored Democracies.

Recalling its resolution 49/30 of 7 December 1994 in which it recognized the importance of the Managua Declaration[4] and Plan of Action[5] adopted by the Second International Conference of New or Restored Democracies in July 1994, as well as its resolutions 50/133 of 20 December 1995, 51/31 of 6 December 1996 and 52/18 of 21 November 1997,

Recalling also the document entitled "Progress Review and Recommendations", adopted by the Third International Conference of New or Restored Democracies on Democracy and Development, held at Bucharest from 2 to 4 September 1997,[6] in which guidelines, principles and recommendations were addressed to Governments, civil society, the private sector, donor countries and international community,

Noting in particular the recommendations contained in that document addressed to the United Nations system and the international financial organizations,[7]

Taking note with satisfaction of the seminars, workshops and conferences on democratization and good governance organized in 1998, as well as those currently being planned, under the auspices of the International Conference of New or Restored Democracies,

Taking note of the views of Member States expressed in the debate on this question at its forty-ninth, fiftieth, fifty-first, fifty-second and fifty-third sessions,

Bearing in mind that the activities of the United Nations carried out in support of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate democracy are undertaken in accordance with the Charter and only at the specific request of the Member States concerned,

Also bearing in mind that democracy, development and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing and that democracy is based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and on their full participation in all aspects of their lives,

Noting that a considerable number of societies have recently undertaken significant efforts to achieve their social, political and economic goals through democratization and the reform of their economies, pursuits that are deserving of the support and recognition of the international community,

Noting with satisfaction that the Fourth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies will be held at Cotonou, Benin, in the year 2000,

Stressing the importance of support by Member States, the United Nations system, the specialized agencies and other intergovernmental organizations for the holding of the Fourth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies,

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[4] A/49/713, annex I.

[5] Ibid., annex II.

[6] A/52/334, appendix.

[7] Ibid., sect. IV.

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General[8] and its focus on innovative ways and means to enable the Organization to respond effectively and in an integrated manner to requests of Member States for assistance in the field of good governance and democratization,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General;[8]

2. *Expresses its appreciation* for the activities carried out by the United Nations system, as well as the observations and recommendations contained in the report, with respect to building a political culture through human rights observance, mobilization of civil society, electoral assistance, free and independent media, enhancing the rule of law and improving accountability, transparency and quality of public sector management and democratic structures of government;

3. *Invites* the Secretary-General, Member States, the relevant specialized agencies and bodies of the United Nations system, as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to contribute actively to the follow-up process of the Third International Conference of New or Restored Democracies on Democracy and Development;[9]

4. *Commends* the Secretary-General, and through him the United Nations system, for the activities undertaken at the request of Governments to support the efforts to consolidate democracy;

5. *Welcomes* the measures taken within the organizations of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for coordinating their work carried out in the field of democratization;

6. *Welcomes also* the work carried out by the follow-up mechanism to the Third International Conference of New or Restored Democracies on Democracy and Development;

7. *Recognizes* that the United Nations has an important role to play in providing timely, appropriate and coherent support to the efforts of Governments to achieve democratization within the context of their development efforts;

8. *Stresses* that the activities undertaken by the Organization must be in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

9. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to continue to improve the capacity of the Organization to respond effectively to the requests of Member States through coherent, adequate support of their efforts to achieve the goals of good governance and democratization;

10. *Encourages* Member States to promote democratization and to make additional efforts to identify possible steps to support the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies;

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[8] A/53/554 and Corr.1.

[9] Ibid., chap. II.

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

12. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled "Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies".

67th plenary meeting
23 November 1998